

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
Forum on “After Newtown: A National Conversation on Violence and Severe Mental
Illness”
March 5, 2013

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Thank you for being here today for a national conversation on violence and severe mental illness. The tragic loss at Sandy Hook Elementary School of 20 innocent children and six teachers has shocked the conscience of this country. To ensure such horror never happens again, we must confront the realities of severe mental illness and the connection to violence. We must also learn about the barriers and challenges facing parents who are trying to take care of someone who has a severe mental illness.

In particular, I would like to recognize the parents who are here to share their stories: I thank you for taking the time to be here and having the courage to share your stories with us. Your stories today should help other families and hopefully spur action to help save lives.

I also appreciate the participation of our expert panelists and look forward to hearing from them.

Finally, I want to recognize the Oversight and Investigations Chairman, Tim Murphy, for all his work on this forum. Chairman Murphy has spent his professional and political life dedicated to issues involving the care and treatment of the mentally ill. In the days after Newtown, he came to me and asked to lead the committee's work on this issue. I want to commend him and Ranking Member DeGette for bringing us together.

Today's forum is an important first step to finding solutions and improving federal programs under the committee's jurisdiction.

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